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TERRIFYING ISSUE OF THE ALL-NEW...

TALES FROM THE CRYPT

BASED ON THE CLASSIC EC COMICS SERIES.



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"A MURDERIN' IDOL"

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LETTERER



THE CRYPT-KEEPER

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PAPERCUT **Z**

NO. 3

ALL-NEW!



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ROR

TALES FROM THE CRYPT

FEATURING...



THE CRYPT-KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH



THE VAULT-KEEPER

\$3.95US \$4.95CAN



03

0 71896 45306 5

**A MURDERIN'
IDOL!** AS NOT
SEEN ON TV!



WASSUP WITH THE
CRYPT-KEEPER?!

GLAD YOU AXED! HE'S
BEEN READING THE
ONLINE REVIEWS OF
HIS LATEST CRYPT
COMIC! HEH HEH!



EITHER HE'S SO
SELF-ABSORBED THAT'S
HE'S GHOULGLED HIMSELF TO
DEATH OR THE REVIEWS ARE
WAY SCARIER THAN HIS STORIES
--HE HASN'T BUDGED IN HOURS!

WELL, OLD
WITCH, YOU KNOW
WHAT THEY SAY--
EC COME, EC GO!

HEY, THAT'LL
LOOK GROOVY
IN MY VAULT!



OL' C-K REMINDS ME
OF ANOTHER DESPERATELY
NEEDY NINCOMPOOP NAMED
JAYSAN! HE TOO WANTED TO
BE LOVED BY MILLIONS! THAT'S
WHY JAYSAN HOPED TO BECOME
THE POPSTAR IDOL! HERE'S A
FRIGHTENING FABLE FROM MY
WITCH'S CAULDRON CALLED...

*A Murderin'
Idol*

AT A RATTY TENEMENT FLAT, A WANNABE SUPER-STAR HAS OVERSLEPT...

I'M HERE AT THE FIRST DAY OF TRYOUTS FOR NEXT SEASON'S EDITION OF POPSTAR IDOL--

OH, NO! WHY DIDN'T YOU WAKE ME UP?! YOU KNEW I WANTED TO BE THERE, GLORIA!

--AS YOU CAN SEE, THE CROWD IS IMMENSE! MANY HAVE BEEN IN LINE FOR DAYS TO GET THEIR CHANCE TO AUDITION FOR THE HIT SHOW!



OH, JAYSAN! LOOK HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE THERE! YOU WOULDN'T HAVE A CHANCE OF GETTING IN!

I'VE GOT TO TRY! THIS IS MY BIG CHANCE TO BE A SUPERSTAR!



I KNOW I'VE GOT WHAT IT TAKES TO BE THE NEXT IDOL! EVEN THOUGH I HAVEN'T SUNG PROFESSIONALLY, I'VE GOT THE LOOKS, THE MOVES AND AN INCREDIBLE SINGING VOICE!

MY MOM TOLD ME SO!

YOU SHOULD BE LOOKING FOR A REAL JOB INSTEAD OF LIVING IN YOUR FANTASY WORLD!





DAMN HER! SHE HAS NO FAITH IN MY TALENT! IF SHE WASN'T PAYING THE RENT, I'D KICK HER TO THE CURB! IF SHE MAKES ME MISS MY CHANCE I'LL KILL HER!



GOOD LORD! LOOK AT THE LINE! THERE MUST BE THOUSANDS OF JERKS TRYING TO GET ON THE SHOW!

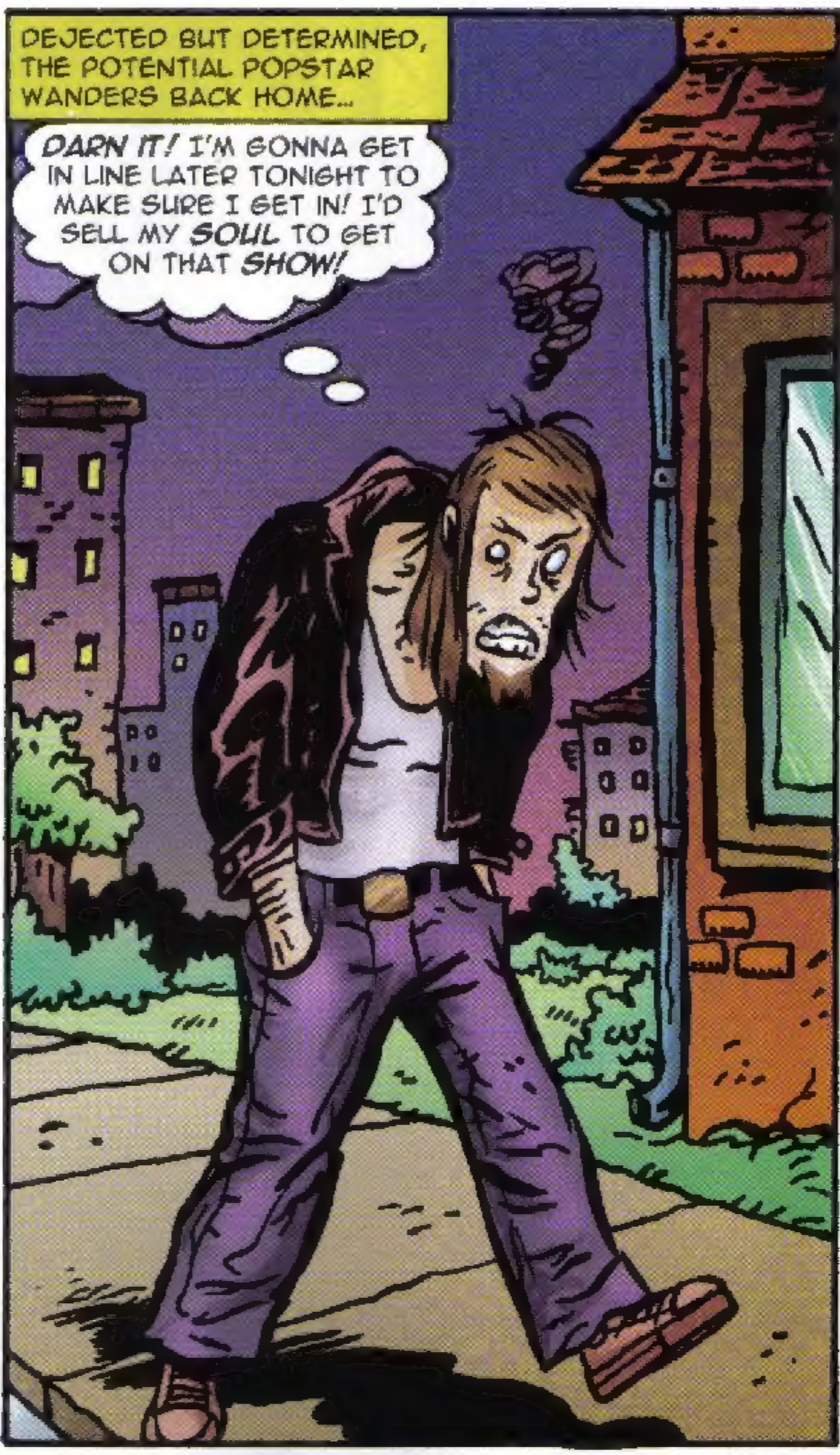


HEY! WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING, KID?

I WANT TO AUDITION FOR POPSTAR IDOL!



YEAH, YOU AND A MILLION OTHERS! THE TRYOUTS ARE CLOSED FOR TODAY! COME BACK TOMORROW!



LITTLE REALIZING HOW TRUE HIS STATEMENT IS, HE FLIPS THROUGH THE TOME...

IT'S IN SOME WEIRD LANGUAGE... THOUGH I'M STARTING TO UNDERSTAND IT!



I GUESS IT IS IN ENGLISH AFTER ALL! IT LOOKED **FOREIGN** AT FIRST, BUT NOW I CAN READ IT! IT'S SOME SORT OF BOOK OF **MAGIC SPELLS** THAT CAN MAKE ANY WISH COME **TRUE!**

WELL, I DON'T NEED IT! I HAVE ALL THE RAW TALENT I NEED TO MAKE MY DREAMS COME TRUE!



HOWEVER, IT COULDN'T HURT TO HAVE A LITTLE HELP, I GUESS!



JAYSAN TAKES THE BOOK HOME, AND WHILE GLORIA IS AT WORK, HE PORES THOUGH ITS PRIMORDIAL, YELLOWED PAGES...

ACCORDING TO THIS, ALL I HAVE TO DO IS SCRIBBLE SOME STRANGE DOODLES ON THE FLOOR AND PERFORM SOME SORT OF >GULP< **SACRIFICE!**



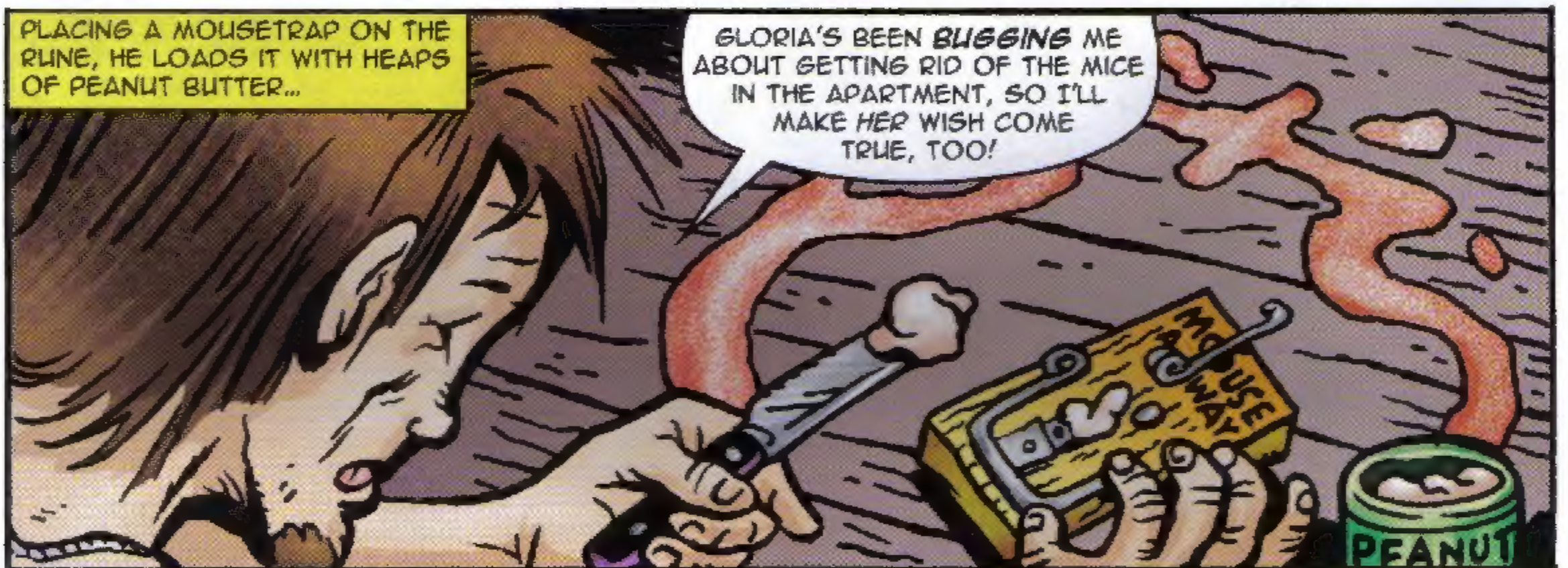
COPYING THE ARCAINE FIGURES FROM THE BOOK, HE CONTEMPLATES HIS NEXT STEP...

I'M SUPPOSED TO GIVE A BLOOD OFFERING TO SUMMON A DEMON TO GRANT MY WISH, B-BUT I CAN'T KILL SOMETHING...OR CAN I? I'VE GOT TO WIN ON POPSTAR IDOL!



PLACING A MOUSETRAP ON THE RUINE, HE LOADS IT WITH HEAPS OF PEANUT BUTTER...

GLORIA'S BEEN BUGGINS ME ABOUT GETTING RID OF THE MICE IN THE APARTMENT, SO I'LL MAKE HER WISH COME TRUE, TOO!



HIDING IN THE SHADOWS, JAYSAN DOESN'T HAVE TO WAIT LONG...

HA! IT WORKED! NOW WHAT?!

SNAP!
SQUEEE!!!



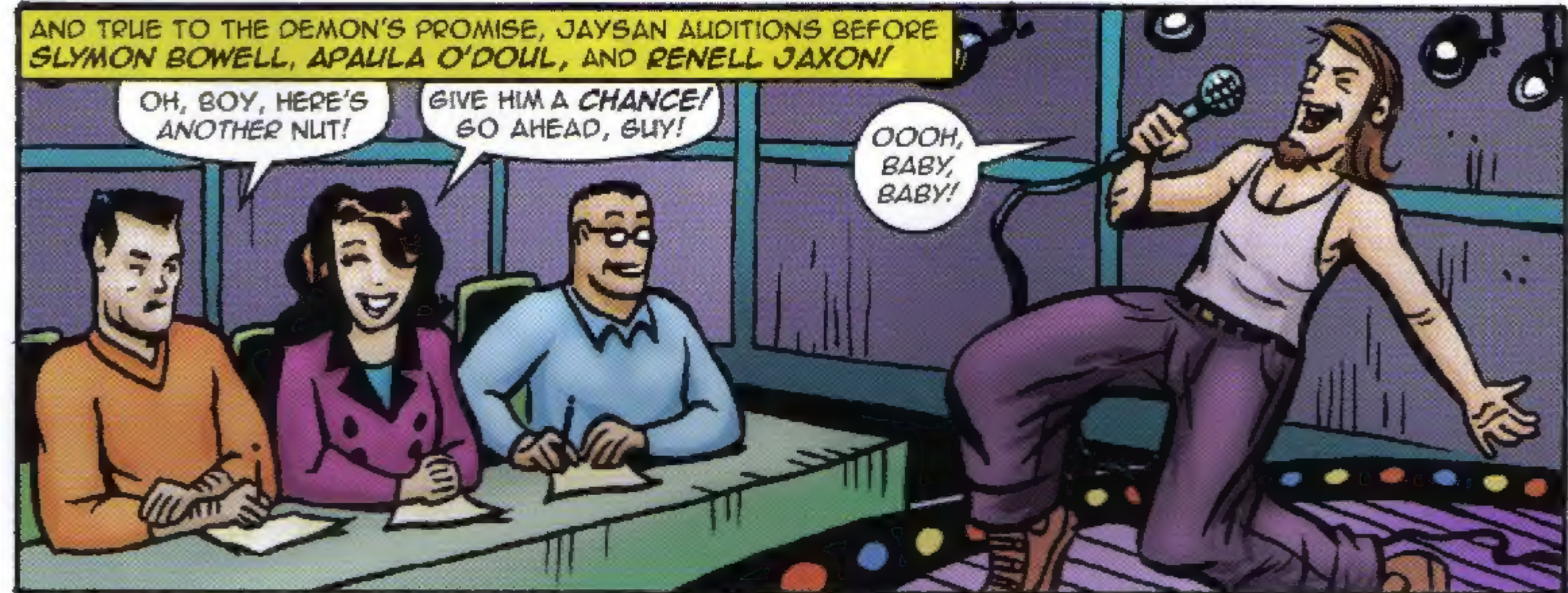
BEFORE HIS ASTONISHED EYES, THE DEAD MOUSE IS CONSUMED IN FLAMES AND A STRANGE SMOKE RISES WITH AN OFFENSIVE SULFURIC SMELL!

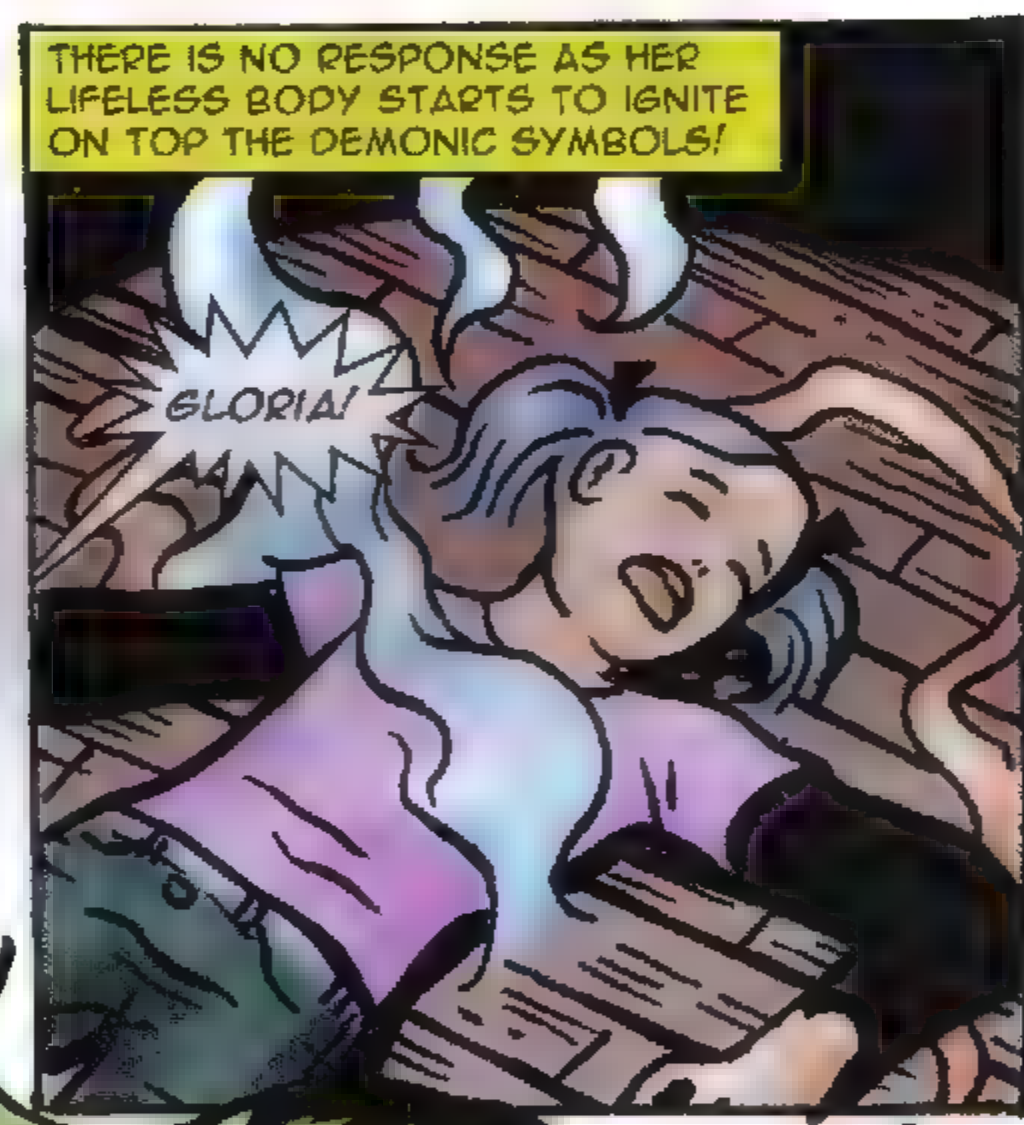




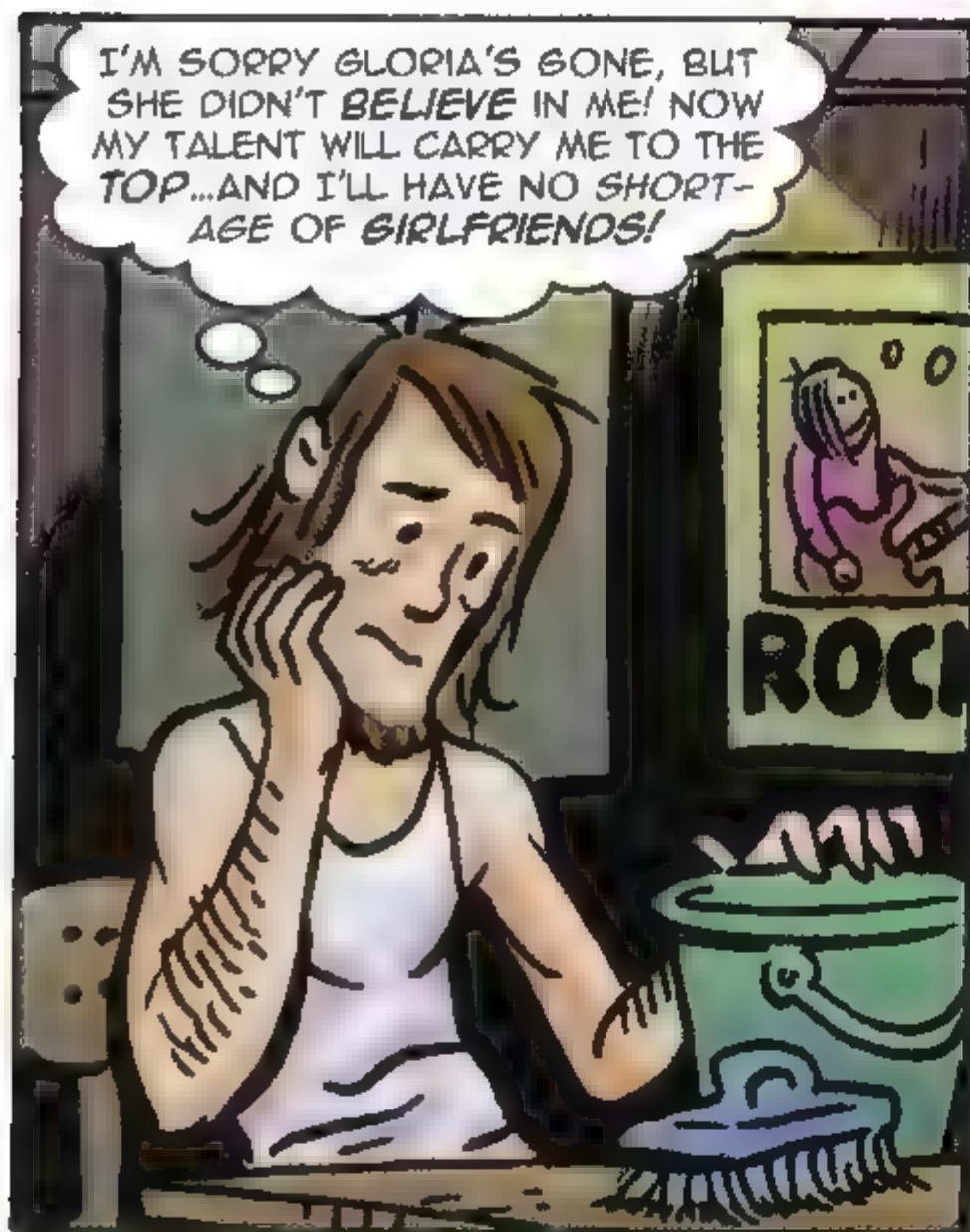


AND TRUE TO THE DEMON'S PROMISE, JAYSAN AUDITIONS BEFORE SLYMON BOWELL, APAULA O'DOUL, AND RENELL JAXON!









I'M SORRY GLORIA'S GONE, BUT SHE DIDN'T BELIEVE IN ME! NOW MY TALENT WILL CARRY ME TO THE TOP...AND I'LL HAVE NO SHORT-AGE OF GIRLFRIENDS!



AND SO BEGINS JAYSAN'S SEEMINGLY INEXPLICABLE RISE ON THE SHOW. DESPITE HIS QUESTIONABLE TALENT, HE GETS A CADRE OF SCREAMING FANS... SIMPLY BECAUSE HE IS ON TV!

OH, BABY, CAN'T LI-I-I-VE WITHOUT YOU--!

JAYSAN!
JAYSAN!

EEEEEEEEEE!

THE MEDIA CLIMBS ON THE BAND-WAGON, PUSHING THE UNLIKELY IDOL IN NEWSPAPERS AND ON TV...



EVEN THE CELEBRITY JUDGES ARE IMPRESSED... MOST OF THEM!

Y'GOTTA ADMIT, HE GETS THE CROWD GOING!

AND HE KEEPS GETTING A LOT OF PHONE VOTES FROM THE AUDIENCE!

YECCH! WHAT A NOISE! HIS CONTINUED SUCCESS IS SURELY THE WORK OF THE DARK ARTS!

WE'LL SEE HOW THE VOTING GOES TONIGHT. AMERICA CAN'T BE SO STUPID AS TO MAKE HIM THE POPSTAR IDOL!



THE VOTES ARE ALL IN! THE JUDGES AND THE PEOPLE HAVE DECIDED-- CEDRIC, YOU'RE SAFE!

"--AND FOR THE FIRST TIME
FACING ELIMINATION...JAYSAN!"

WHAT?!

IT CAN'T BE! I
CAN'T LOSE! I
JUST CANT!

IF ONLY I HAD
TIME TO MAKE ANOTHER
SACRIFICE! I CAN'T BE
DEFEATED NOW WHEN
I'M SO CLOSE!

CEDRIC, YOU'RE
SAFE! NOW IT'S DOWN TO
BERTHA AND JAYSAN!
WHO WILL BE GOING
HOME TONIGHT?

JAYSAN...YOU...
YOU ARE COMING
BACK NEXT
WEEK!

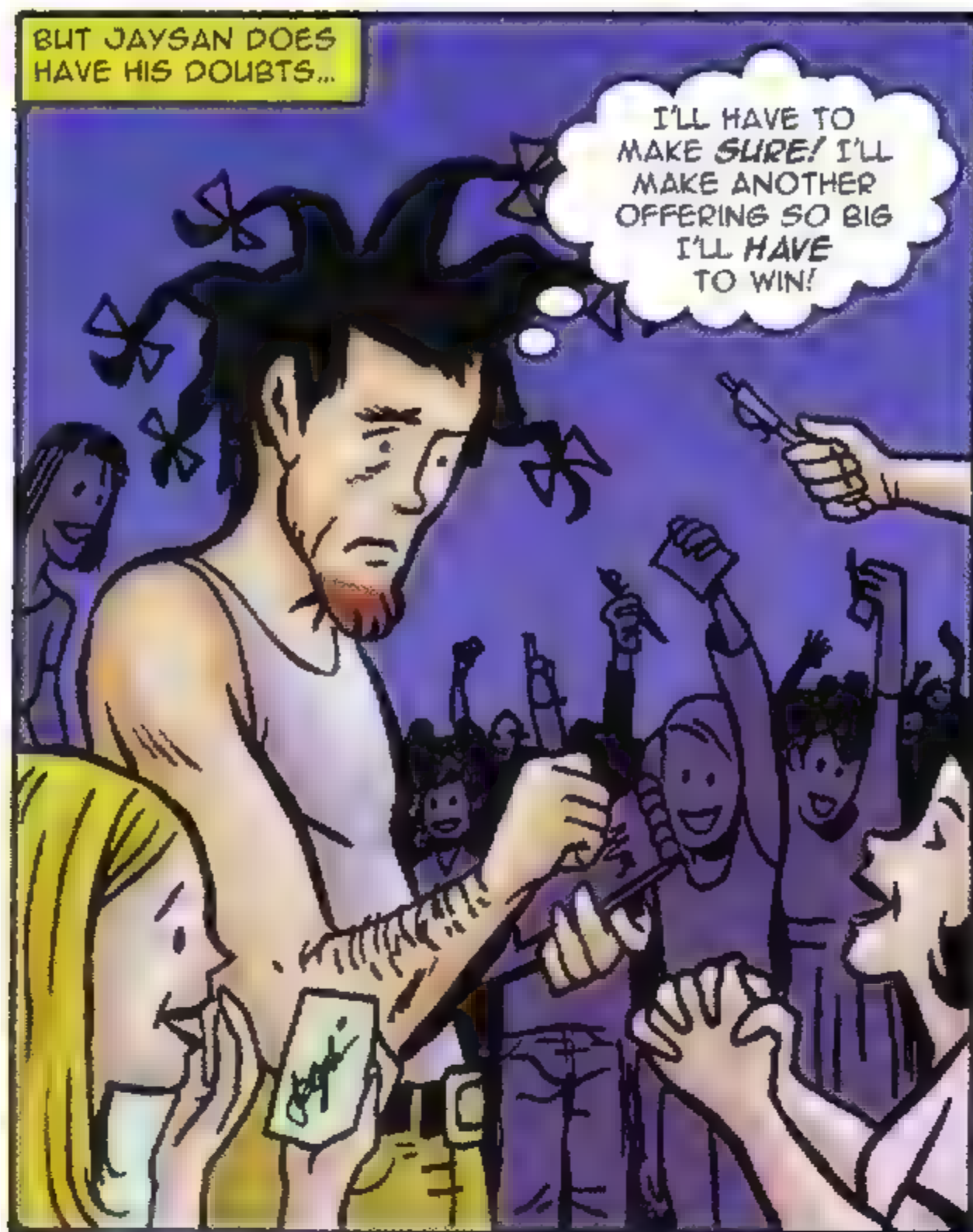
JAYSAN!!!

JAYSAN
ROCKS!

MAKE
MINE
JAYSAN

WE
JAYSAN!







I KILLED HIM AND THOSE FLAMES WILL CONSUME ALL EVIDENCE OF WHAT I DID!



WOW! THIS IS THE BIGGEST DEMON YET! HE'S SURE TO GRANT ME MY ULTIMATE WISH!

I WANT TO WIN POPSTAR IDOL!!!

NOT SO FAST!



THOUGH THIS MAY BE YOUR GREATEST OFFERING YET, IT IS STILL NOT ENOUGH! ALL I CAN GUARANTEE IS THAT YOU WILL BECOME A FINALIST THE REST IS UP TO YOU!

WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO? MURDER THE WHOLE AUDIENCE?

KNOCK KNOCK



SORRY TO INTERRUPT.. ISN'T CEDRIC HERE WITH YOU? AND WHAT'S THAT SMELL?

UM, NO, I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM..AND I'M AFRAID I HAVE A LITTLE GAS PROBLEM WHEN I'M NERVOUS!





I'M GOING TO BE A FINALIST BUT TO MAKE **SURE** I WIN, I'VE GOT TO FIGURE OUT WHO WOULD MAKE THE **GREATEST SACRIFICE POSSIBLE** TO MAKE MY DREAM COME TRUE!



SURE ENOUGH, WHEN THE LAST TWO FINALISTS ARE ANNOUNCED, ONE OF THEM IS...

---JAYSAN!

THE AUDIENCE LOVES ME!

YAYY!!
WHOO-HOO!!
JAYSAN!!



MAYBE I CAN WIN ON MY OWN WITHOUT ANY MORE **DEMONIC HELP!**



WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE FINALISTS, **SLYMON?**

AN UTTER **TRAVESTY!** WE'VE SEEN SOME REAL TALENT GET VOTED OFF IN FAVOR OF THAT CATERWALLING **BANSHEE**, **JAYSAN!** IF HE WINS, IT'LL BE A NEW LOW FOR MUSICAL STANDARDS!

I WOULD WIN IF IT WASN'T FOR THAT **BOWELL** ALWAYS **BAD-MOULTHING** ME! HE JUST VOTED HIMSELF AS TOP FINALIST FOR THE **ULTIMATE SACRIFICE** THAT WILL ASSURE MY VICTORY!

ON THE AFTERNOON OF THE FINAL SHOW, JAYSAN ARRANGES A MEETING WITH SLYMON...

THANKS FOR MEETING WITH ME. I KNOW YOU HAVEN'T MUCH BELIEF IN MY SINGING ABILITY...

THAT'S AN UNDERSTATEMENT!

NEVER HAVE I SEEN SOMEONE WITH SUCH AN ABYSMAL LACK OF TALENT GO SO FAR! THE VOTERS MUST BE MAD TO HAVE TAKEN YOU TO THIS LEVEL!

ACTUALLY I'VE HAD A LITTLE HELP...

I KNEW IT! SOME COMPUTER PROGRAM TO MANIPULATE THE PHONE SCORES? SAY, WHAT'S THIS THING SCRAWLED ON THE FLOOR?

THE THING THAT'S BEEN HELPING ME!

WHAT--P!





YES! I
AM THE ULTIMATE
DEMON! I HAVE USED MY
POSITION OF PRODUCING
TALENT SHOWS TO COL-
LECT NUMEROUS LOST
SOULS!

NO! YOU...
YOU--



AND CONGRATULA-
TIONS! YOU'VE WON
THE COMPETITION--

AHHHH!



...YOU ARE
NOW POPSTAR
IDOL OF HELL
WHERE YOU WILL
PERFORM YOUR
SHRIEKING TO AN
ADORING AUDI-
ENCE... FOR ALL
ETERNITY!!!

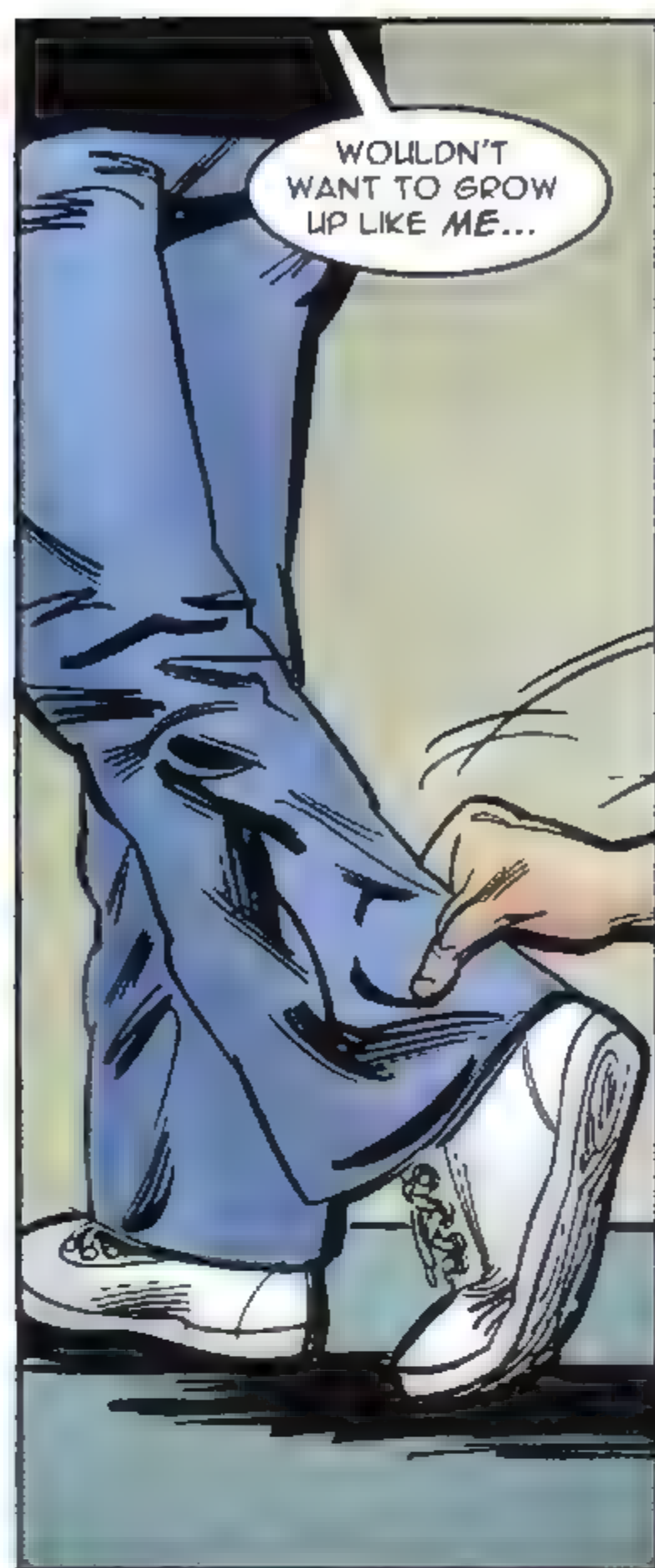
NO! NOOOOOO!

THE END











RICO? Y-Y-
YOU'RE HERE
ALREADY?

YEAH.

IS MY
MONEY HERE,
TOO?



N-N-NOT YET,
BUT I'M ON MY WAY
TO S-S-SELL THIS!

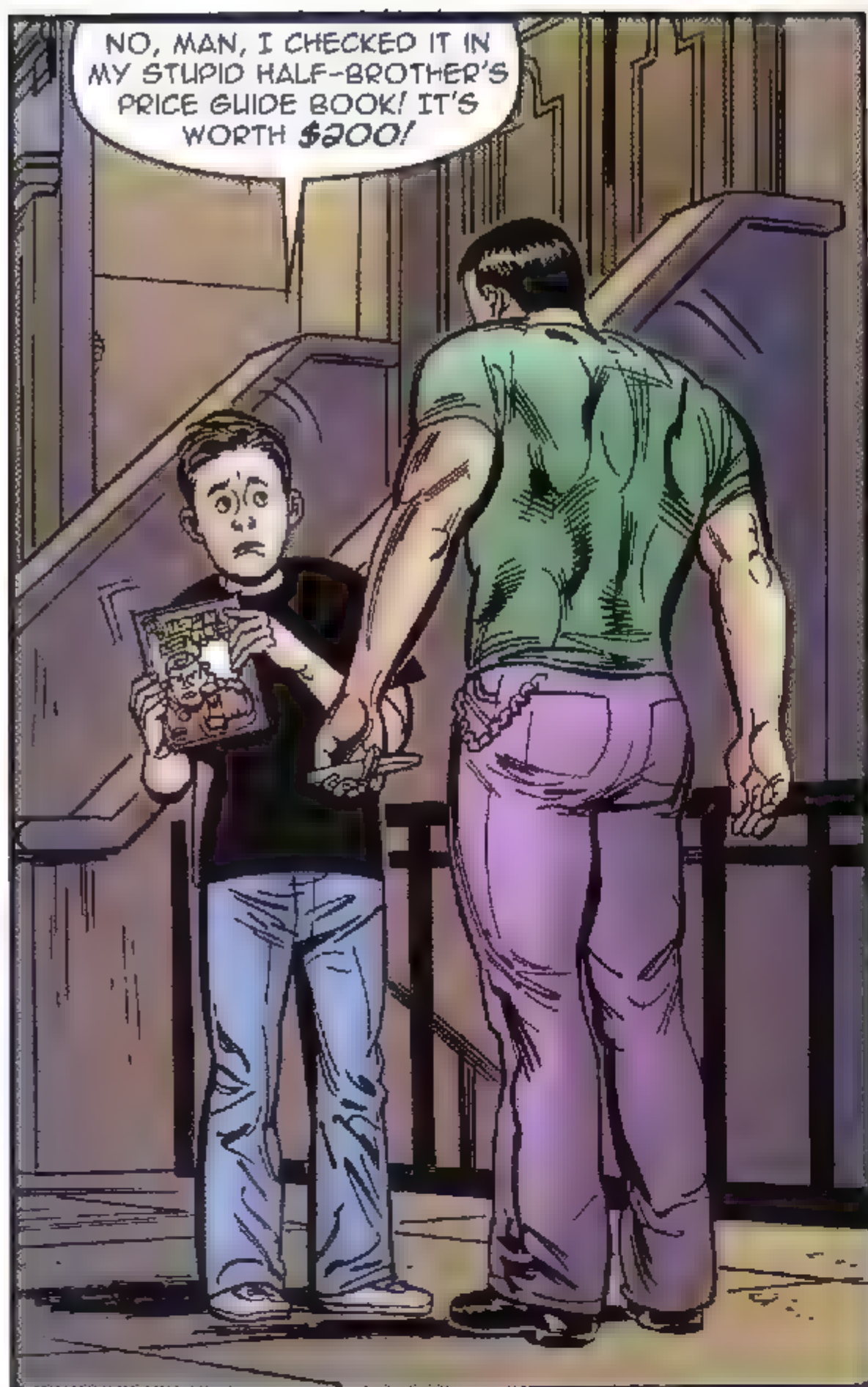
JUST US
LEAGUE #1,
EH? NICE.



BUT THAT THING
LOOKS LIKE IT'S
BEEN READ
A LOT.

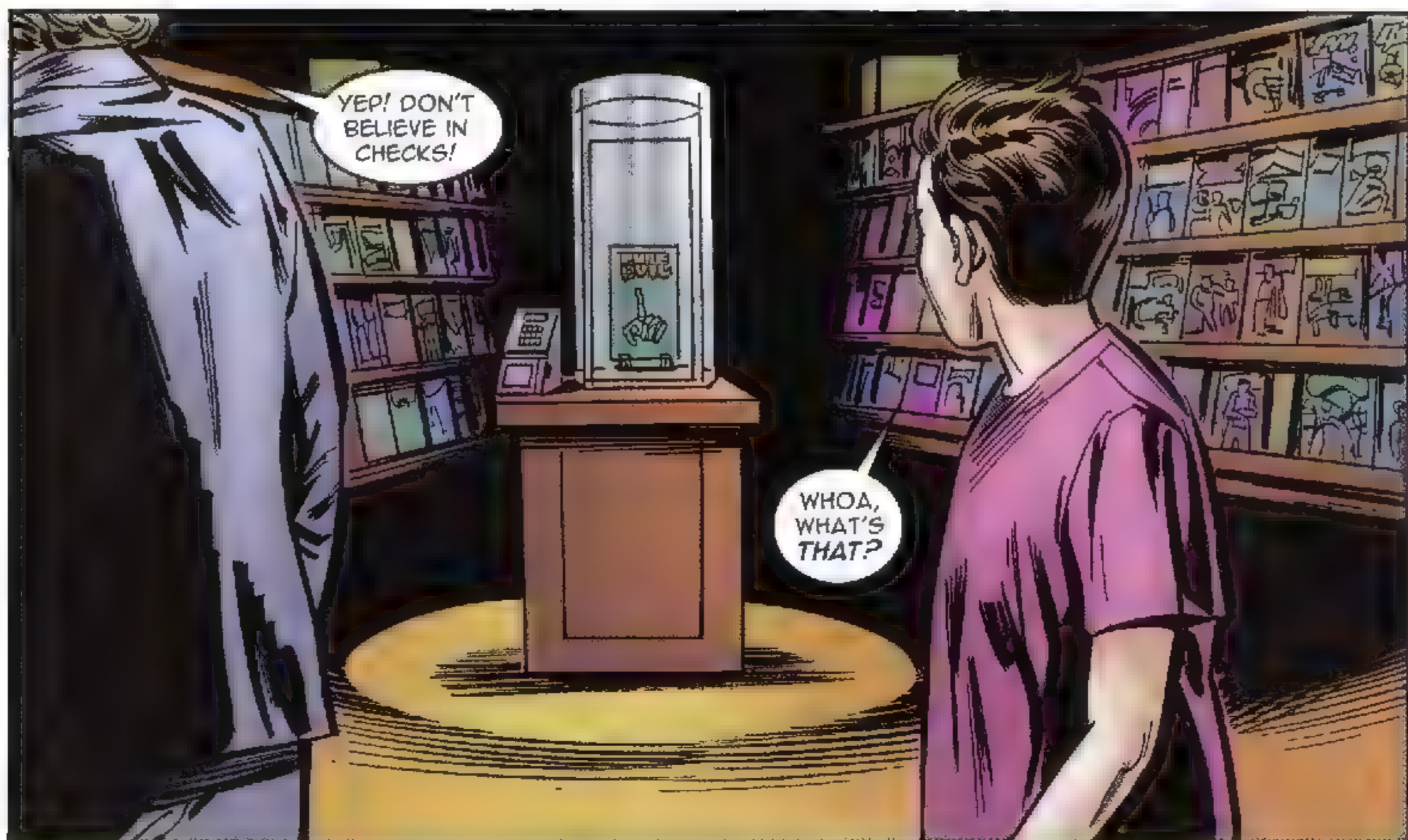
AIN'T WORTH SO
MUCH IF IT'S BEEN
READ A LOT. SOME-
THING COMES OFF
THE PRICE.

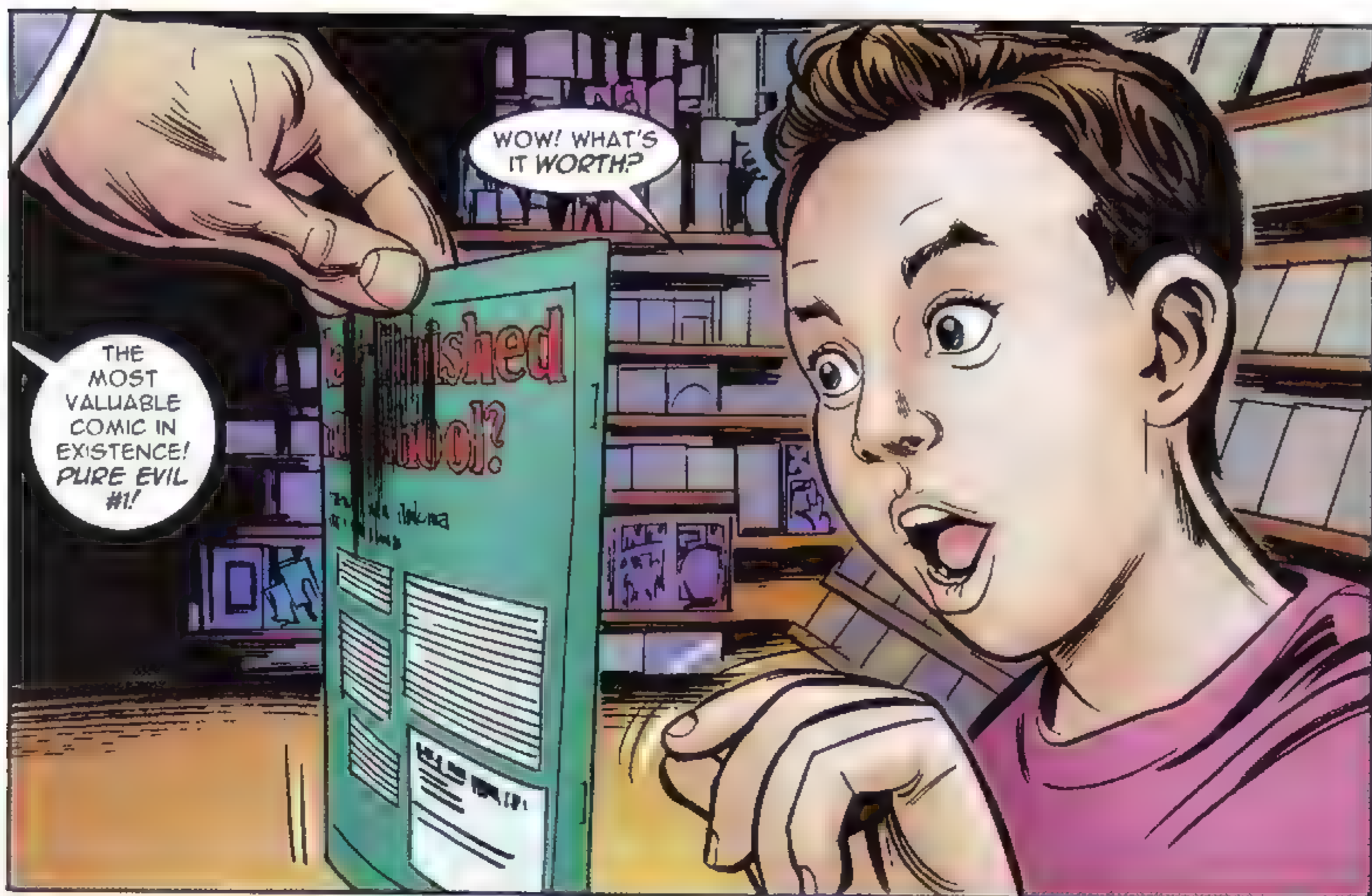
WHICH MEANS
I MAY HAVE TO
TAKE SOMETHING
OFF YOU.

















HE'S DEAD..
GOTTA BE...

GOTTA FIND
HIS CASH BOX..
STEAL A BUNCH
OF COMICS...



OR...JUST TAKE THE MOST
VALUABLE COMIC IN THE
WORLD!



UNGH! WHAT'S
THIS MADE OF?
ADAMANTIUM?



GOOD THING YOU
SHOWED ME HOW TO
OPEN IT, HUH?

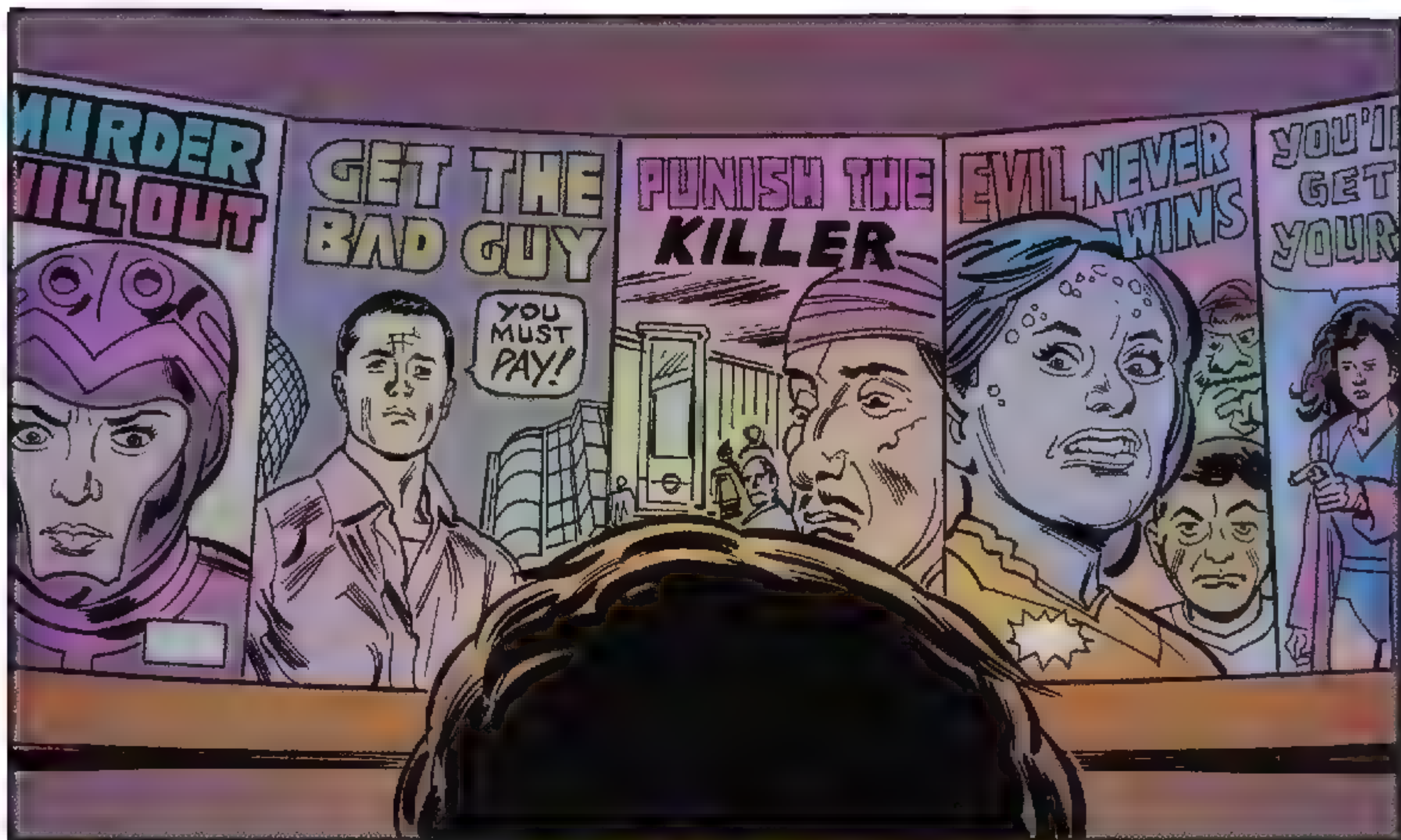
YOUR SECURITY
BOX WON'T CARE IF
YOUR FINGERPRINT'S
ALIVE OR DEAD!



IN FACT, I BET
NOBODY CARES IF
YOU'RE ALIVE OR
DEAD!









IT'S NOT POSSIBLE!
THAT WAS THE OLD
MAN'S FACE!



IT'S SOME KIND
OF TRICK!



THAT'S NOT A WALL!
IT'S SOME KIND OF
PLASTIC!





I MUST BE
DREAMING!

ANY SECOND
NOW, I'M GOING
TO WAKE UP! I
KNOW IT!

SOMEONE
WAKE ME UP!

AFTER A LIFETIME OF COLLECTING
HEROES, I FINALLY FIGURED IT WAS
TIME TO COLLECT A FEW VILLAINS
TO BALANCE THINGS!

I'D NO
IDEA HOW EASY
IT WOULD BE!

HA-HA-HA-
HA!

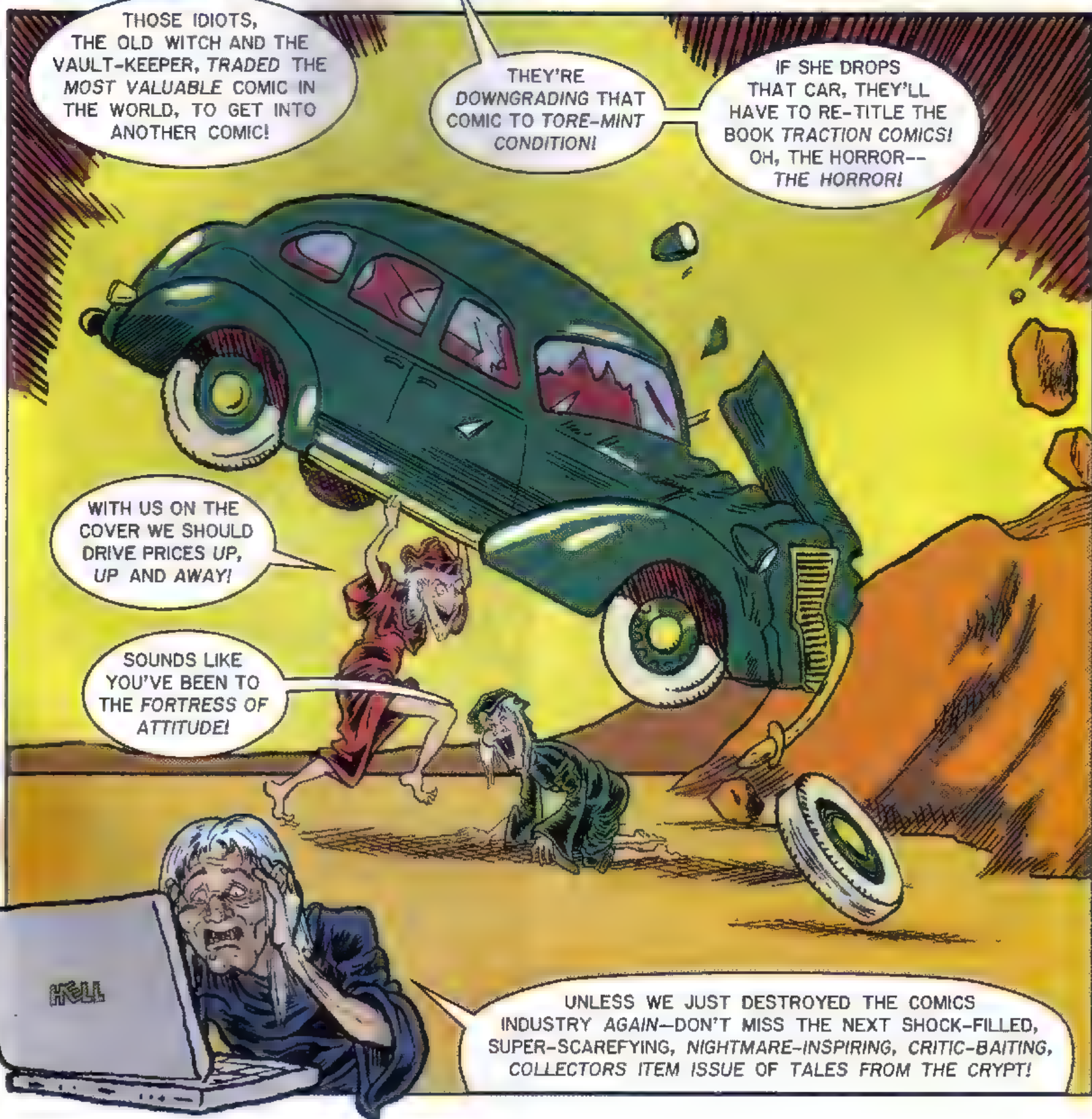
NO! PLEASE!
PLEASE! I'M
BEGGING YOU!

THE END



YOU KNOW, KIDDIES, IT'S JUVENILE DELINQUENTS SUCH AS DERRICK THAT GIVE COMICS A REALLY BAD NAME!

OH, NO! WHAT'S THIS?!



THOSE IDIOTS, THE OLD WITCH AND THE VAULT-KEEPER, TRADED THE MOST VALUABLE COMIC IN THE WORLD, TO GET INTO ANOTHER COMIC!

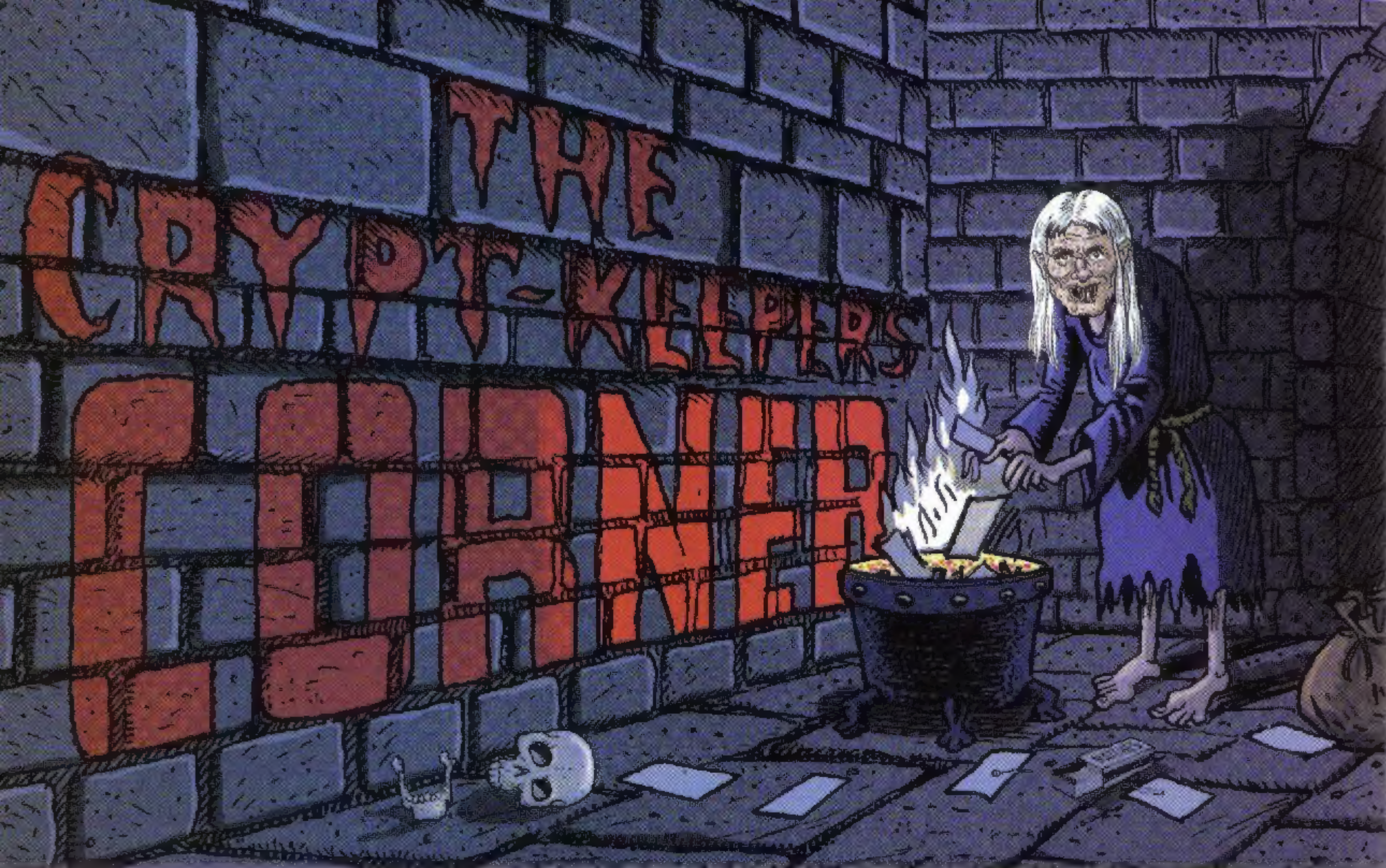
THEY'RE DOWNGRADING THAT COMIC TO TORE-MINT CONDITION!

IF SHE DROPS THAT CAR, THEY'LL HAVE TO RE-TITLE THE BOOK TRACTION COMICS! OH, THE HORROR-- THE HORROR!

WITH US ON THE COVER WE SHOULD DRIVE PRICES UP, UP AND AWAY!

SOUNDS LIKE YOU'VE BEEN TO THE FORTRESS OF ATTITUDE!

UNLESS WE JUST DESTROYED THE COMICS INDUSTRY AGAIN--DON'T MISS THE NEXT SHOCK-FILLED, SUPER-SCAREFYING, NIGHTMARE-INSPIRING, CRITIC-BAITING, COLLECTORS ITEM ISSUE OF TALES FROM THE CRYPT!



THE CRYPT-KEEPER

Salutations, you CRAZED CONSUMERS of PUTRID PAPER CUTZ PUBLICATIONS! Time once again for our VICIOUS VERBAL exchanges, regarding our previous phantasmaGORYcal issues!

But first, here's the SHOCKING results of the voting on TALES FROM THE CRYPT #2! "THE TENANT" by Neil Kleid and Steve Mannion just narrowly beat out "THE GARDEN" by Fred Van Lente and Mr. Exes as BEAST, er, best story!

For any of you FOOLISH FRIGHT-FANS who missed our first two TERROR-FILLED issues, I've got good news for you! Our GREEDY publishers have rushed paperback and hardcover books into print collecting most of those stories — they're cleverly called TALES FROM THE CRYPT #1 "Ghouls Gone Wild!" and it's on sale now at BOOKSTORES everywhere! There's even an all-new TERROR-TALE by Don McGregor and Sho Murase called "RUNWAY ROADKILL!" that's to DIE for!

Subject: Tales from the Crypt!!

It's hard to put into words exactly how happy I was to discover that Papercutz is publishing new TFTC comics (and I am NOT a comic book person). I was always a huge fan of the show, but have never had the good fortune to get my hands on one of the comics. So I settled for pestering the guys at my local comic store (monthly) for anything similar. I managed to find a compilation of "The House of Mystery," but hungered for more. Today, I got it. And I'm stoked. I am dying (ha ha) for the next issue to hit the stands. Thanks so much for resurrecting this awesome comic. I'll be with you guys till the end.

Natalie Vazquez,
Puerto Rico

Just until the end, Natalie? What kind of fickle fan are you?

Subject: New Tales From the Crypt Comics

Hello, I am writing in regards to your new Tales From the Crypt comicbook series. While I appreciate your efforts to revive such a quality publication, I feel that you are going about it incorrectly. You say that you want to keep true to the original, yet you've toned down the content to such a degree, that it doesn't even resemble the horrors from half a century ago. Even though it may seem somewhat tame now, back in the day, Tales From the Crypt was considered very edgy and gory. Had it not been for the atmosphere at the time, it would have been even more visceral. Now, standards are such that you can get away with putting a lot more violent content in comicbooks. By toning down the blood, you are not only abiding by standards that are over half a century old, but you are being less gory than even the original comics were!

I also feel that you do not understand the way Tales from the Crypt "shock" endings work. You acknowledge and utilize shock at the end, but not in the way they were intended. You can't just have some random twist at the end, it has to have a social message to it (a "preachy"). Additionally, the end is typically met with a bloody surprise. This final panel is met with a narrative box that describes the gore-shock in great detail, which gives the reader a better description and creates a sense of uneasiness.

Now, we have to talk about the artwork. I don't expect you to mimic the realistic noir-esque panels of the original to a tee, but at least give it a shot. Your artwork in these new comics doesn't even look remotely realistic. It looks like something out of a damn Nickelodeon cartoon!

In closing, I would like to ask you to please reconsider your new vision of these comics or discontinue them and let the crypt rest peacefully while you concentrate on Nancy Drew or something.

Nathan Wakefield

I feel your pain, Nathan. Unfortunately, I'm stuck with Salicrup as editor!

Subject: TFIC Stories

I've read some of the comments about the art seeming like it's geared more towards young children. And while I somewhat agree with that... the stories are quite good and very mature! I thought that they were very nostalgic of the classic EC Tales From The Crypt comics. In the last issue I really enjoyed "The Garden," it kept me guessing all the way 'til the end. But "The Tenant" was definitely my favorite. It really reminded me of the typical 'Poetic Justice' that was often dealt from the old Tales From The Crypt stories.

CAN'T WAIT FOR THE NEXT ISSUE!!

Jeremy Seth Brauner
Tustin, CA

No need to wait, Jeremy—it's here!

Subject: smiling to you, dear

My dear friend, I am pretty and passionate Ukrainian woman, but I am lonely. My heart dies without love as beautiful flower dies without water. I need to love and to be beloved as rose needs to be watered every day. I need kisses and love as no flower can't live without sunny rays. Waiting for your response.

Josi

Get back to me after you die, Josi! (Got to get a new spam-filter!)

Subject: Thanks for returning the greatest comic of all time.

Hi. I've been a fan of Tales from the Crypt for a long time now. Too young for the initial run, but I read a bunch of the reprints, and watched the show. I just finished the new issue #2, and have to say the new comics completely and totally lived up to the originals, the stories are just as creepy, and the art is just completely fabulous. My only complaint is that there is no possibility to get a subscription to "TFTC." Just leaving my opinion, and asking if you are going to also revive the "Vault of Horror" and "Haunt of Fear"? Thanks,

A Fan

An interesting query, A! What do the rest of you EC Fan-Addicts think?

As for subsCRYPTtions, just send us a check or money order, in US funds only, for \$24.00 for a one-year, six-issue subscription to TALES FROM THE CRYPT. Subscriptions begin with the next issue published after we receive your order.

Subject: Keep up the good work!

Hey, I'd just like to say that I LOVE YOUR TALES FROM THE CRYPT COMICS!! I still love the originals, but these are easier for me to read (I'm 13). The artwork is semi-good in "The Garden" though. My favorite comic so far was in issue #2 called "The Tenant." Keep up the terror-ific work! Thank you to the people and my favorite dead-wood star, The Crypt-Keeper! I am in love with the HBO series but most defiantly the comics! I grew up with them since my parents are horror fiend-itties! Love the comics and love the gore!

Maggot Kisses,
Lesley

Thanks, Lesley! If we haven't rotted your young mind yet, maybe we will next issue!

That's all for now! Don't miss TALES FROM THE CRYPT #4—featuring virtual madness by Neil Kleid and Chris Noeth entitled "Extra Life" and a prescient preachy by Don McGregor, James Romberger and Marguerite Van Cook called "Crystal Clear"!

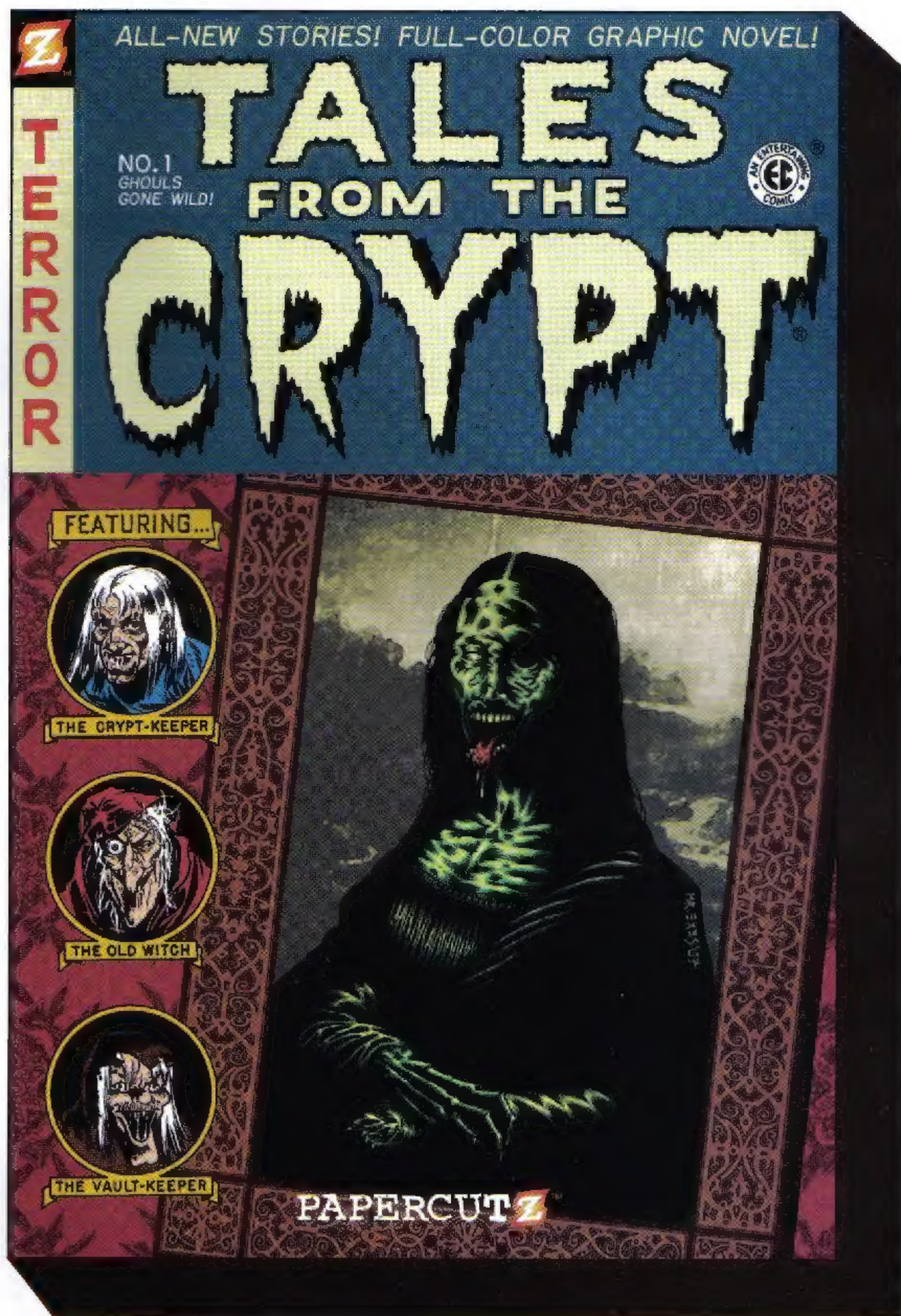
And keep those emails and letters coming, kiddies! Tell us what you thought of this teratoid, yet transcendental third issue. Send your letters to:

The Crypt-Keeper's Corner
40 Exchange Place, Suite 1308
New York, NY 10005

Or email your crazed commentaries to our egomaniacal editor at: salicrup@papercutz.com.

E.C. FANS!

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